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PINK FLOYD

MOTHER

Dave Kilminster, Roger Waters' lead guitarist on the current global tour of *The Wall*, takes TG through his experiences tackling David Gilmour's guitar parts

ROGER Waters has long regarded Pink Floyd's 1979 double-album opus *The Wall* as his greatest personal musical achievement. In many ways, the writing and recording process was more akin to a Waters solo project than any previous Floyd album, a pattern that would be repeated for '83's *The Final Cut*. Indeed, keys player Richard Wright even left the band during the sessions, although he was later employed as a freelance musician when *The Wall* was taken out on the road. The album tells the traumatic life story of Pink, a rock musician loosely based on Waters, who ends up building a metaphorical wall between himself and the outside world in order to cope with the emotional pain he feels inside. *The Wall* was given the full theatrical treatment both for the 1980 tour, which involved a 40-foot white cardboard wall being built onstage during performances, and the 1982 Alan Parker-directed movie. Gerald Scarfe's trippy animations dominated both the film and the mind-blowing live shows. Since September 2010, Roger has once again been taking *The Wall* live production out across the globe with a lavish stage set costing tens of millions of pounds and backing by a stellar cast of musicians.

"The show is an indication of Roger's genius really," explains Dave Kilminster, lead guitarist on the tour. "It's unlike anything else that there's ever been. It's part rock show, part Broadway and part IMAX because the visuals projected on the wall are just absolutely stunning. It's a huge honour to be part of it and – hopefully without sounding pretentious – it almost feels like you're contributing to history. It's an epic thing."

Mother, like the majority of *The Wall* album, was recorded in a number of different studio facilities across France and the USA. Roger Waters played the acoustic guitar while David Gilmour naturally crafted and played the electric solo, which kicks in just before the three-minute mark. Gilmour plugged his legendary black Strat into what was probably a combination of an Alembic F-2B preamp with Yamaha RA-200 revolving speaker cab for the modulated tone and a Hiwatt DR103 for the unmodulated tone. A Ram's Head Big Muff stompbox was also likely to have been involved.

While Dave Kilminster tackles lead duties for almost every song during the current production of *The Wall*, Snowy White actually plays the solo on *Mother* while Dave happily assumes bass duties, playing Roger's own Fender Precision.

"One of the really cool things about this tune live is that we're actually using some of the footage from the original Earl's Court show so Roger's



Off *The Wall*: Pink Floyd (left to right) Richard Wright, Roger Waters, David Gilmour and Nick Mason

actually double-tracking his vocal from 30 years ago," Dave tells us.

"And it's nice to get out of the spotlight because there's enough really stressful moments in the show. It's nice to let Snowy and G.E. Smith [additional guitarist] show off a little bit during that song."

One of the greatest challenges that Kilminster had before *The Wall* tour commenced was matching Gilmour's tone and playing.

"I just sat down and wrote out everything," he explains. "I wrote out every guitar noise and every part that there was on the album. I made little notes on the delay times and what effects I could hear and then, when I knew what parts I was playing, I had to program the gear that I was using, keeping it as simple as possible. I've got this Eventide TimeFactor, which does all

the delays, and Brunetti Mercury amps with 50-watt heads. I've got two of those running the chorus and the delay in stereo. It's a beautiful noise. I don't take liberties. If [Gilmour] slides into a note in a certain way from a semitone lower then I do exactly the same. I try to be as respectful as possible to the original and just play the same notes in the same order with the same phrasing and then, to be honest, you're most of the way there. The rest of it is just a little bit of common sense really. You just listen to the sounds and you think, 'OK... is that clean? Is that just slightly distorted or is that very distorted? Is that a bit middly or a bit topsey? Which pickup is that?' I don't get really anal about it but I get pretty close! I make it sound as much like the original recording as possible because that's what people want to hear."

Dave's highlights during *The Wall* performances include classical guitar on *Is There Anybody Out There?* and detuning a whole tone down for *Run Like Hell*. But when we ask about his least favourite part of the show, there's no hesitation. Well, how would you feel about having to play the *Comfortably Numb* solo perched near the top of a 40-foot wall in front of up to 70,000 Pink Floyd obsessives?

"It's some people's favourite tune and everyone knows what the solo's supposed to sound like," says Dave. "And I'm going up in this dodgy lift, which feels very unsafe anyway and as I'm going up, I'm thinking, 'Ummm, did I remember to put my volume pedal down? Did I switch the overdrive on? Did I remember to change that delay setting so that it's the right one? God, I hope this thing stays in tune and I don't break a string!' Then, all of a sudden you're at the top of the wall and there's 30,000 phone cameras pointing at you! You have no idea how stressful it is!" (MF)

"For 'The Wall' tour, I wrote out every guitar noise" **Dave Kilminster**

Three of a kind

IF YOU LIKE 'MOTHER', TRY THESE...



THE WIDOW THE MARS VOLTA

THE 6/8 feel of Volta's take on prog rock is Floyd-esque in pace, and Omar Rodríguez-López's fiery solo is every bit as emotional as David Gilmour's.



DAUGHTER PEARL JAM

TECHNICALLY, *Daughter* doesn't really share a lot with *Mother* but both tracks are driven by acoustic guitar and have driving, melodic solos.



CODY MOGWAI

LIKE *Mother*, this track from Mogwai's second album is in G and uses open chords while the vocals and lazy rides of the drums are highly reminiscent of Floyd.